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Director



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Thompson
5/6/86

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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Colbert RITS file

May 5, 1986

Board of Spokane
County Commissioners
Spokane, WA 99260-0100

Gentlemen:

On April 16 you submitted a letter to the Department asking for a delay of the Colbert Landfill Feasibility Study while you review the adequacy of the Remedial Investigation.

As you know, this investigation was undertaken by the state to fulfill the requirements for cleanup of sites on the National Priorities List. These requirements involve investigation of the extent and migration of contamination and a study of the reasonable alternatives for taking care of the problem. All Superfund sites undergo the same basic Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) process. A major portion of this work is related to the community relations effort to ensure that all affected parties have a chance to comment and participate in the decision making process. As part of this effort, several public meetings have been held, in addition to less formal meetings with the citizens groups, the County Commissioners, and Keytronic. These meetings have allowed information to flow from Olympia to Spokane and back directly and have aided in the establishing the direction of the project.

The Remedial Investigation is nearing completion. The draft report should be available for your review the week of May 19. Both the state and EPA will also review this document for its completeness and acceptability. Should any of the resulting comments be serious enough to affect the course of the Feasibility Study, we will reevaluate our direction and incorporate the results.

Because the project has already been delayed several times for reasons beyond our control and because the PRPs have had several years to request a greater role in the implementation of the RI/FS, we feel that it is not reasonable to delay the project further. However, we recognize that the remedial investigation is the basis of the feasibility study, which in turn is the basis for selecting the final remedial measure. Therefore it is important that all comments be received before the draft remedial investigation is finalized. All comments (from the state, EPA, PRPs and citizens) will need to be submitted to Golder for incorporation into the final document within four weeks of receipt of the draft report. As mentioned previously, any substantive comments which show that the RI is deficient will be seriously considered. At that time, the project will be delayed if necessary.

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If there are no serious problems with the RI, the project will proceed on schedule, with a final remedial alternative being selected in September.

The time frame for completing the selected Remedial Alternative will be dependent upon how negotiations between Ecology and the responsible parties proceed. These negotiations will have a preset duration so as not to delay implementation. During this period, Ecology will work with Keytronic, Spokane County, and any other responsible parties you identify to develop a consent order to complete the work. If we fail to achieve a consent order during the specified time, the state and EPA will implement the remedial alternative and then initiate cost recovery proceedings. A notice letter informing you of your status as a potential responsible party will follow under separate cover.

I hope this approach will be acceptable to you. It is not our intention to eliminate the PRPs from the decision making process. However, our first responsibility is to see that the health risks stemming from the Colbert Landfill are assessed and controlled as soon as possible. Too much time has already passed and the problem has now grown far beyond anyone's expectations. Further delay is likely to make the problem worse, not better.

If you have any questions regarding this decision, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Carol Kraege
Hazardous Waste Cleanup Program

CK:jv

cc: Neil Thompson, EPA
Jerry Jewett
Fred Gardner
Terese Richmond